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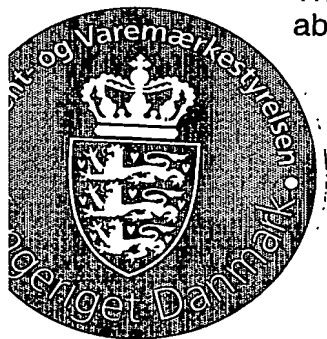
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Patent- og Varemærkestyrelsen
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Modtaget

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Title of the invention

Device for providing anti-reflux in a body fluid collection and/or sampling system, and method of manufacturing such a device.

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Field of the invention

The present invention relates to a device for providing anti-reflux in a body fluid drainage and/or sampling system comprising at least one part
10 providing a valve seat, and a valve element defining an outer contour formed from a sheet-shaped material blank, said valve element including at least one connecting portion and a flap portion and defining a longitudinal direction extending between the
15 connecting portion and the flap portion, and retaining means for retaining the valve element with respect to the device, said retaining means being integral with the device.

20 Background of the invention

Devices for preventing backflow or reflux in systems for drainage and/or sampling of body fluids are well known in the art. Such devices, which either constitute or have the function of valves, may e.g.
25 be positioned in a connector member connecting a urinary catheter with a urine drainage bag and prevents reflux of the collected urine to the catheter.

There are various designs of such devices. One
30 type of valve which has proven efficient and which is at the same time of a simple structure is the flap or flutter type of valve. In such a valve, a relatively thin flap serves as a valve element and is connected

with one or more parts of the device in such a way that the flap is able to flex or pivot between an open and a closed position. In the closed position, the flap abuts against a valve seat formed on any of
5 the parts of the system. The flap thus allows for passage of fluid in one direction and seals against the valve seat when fluid pressure is exerted in the opposite direction.

The connection between the valve element and the
10 other part or parts of the device may be carried out in different ways. One example is shown in GB patent application No. 2 313 430, in which a flap is formed as the inner portion of a hollow tubular structure forming a valve element. The flap of the valve
15 element is connected integrally with a surrounding connecting portion at one point only and is thus separated from the connecting portion by a C-shaped slot. A simpler version of the same principle is disclosed in US patent No. 3,529,599, in which the
20 valve includes a disk-shaped valve element with a corresponding C-shaped slot. During manufacture of such a valve element, great care must be observed during provision of the slot, as the cut-out material produced may interfere with the manufacturing process
25 and may, at worst, cause complete shutdown, just as any residual material on the cutting surface may affect the sealing properties of the valve. Furthermore, in order to obtain a correct seal, the valve seat of both of the above devices must extend
30 radially inwards of the flap portion. Consequently, the overall dimensions of the anti-reflux device are necessarily relatively large in relation to the available inner dimensions of the tubes of the

system.

US patent No. 3,901,235 discloses an anti-reflux device positioned at the drip chamber of a body fluid collection bag, in which the valve element is
5 relatively large and is sealed to the drip chamber around a major part of its periphery, leaving only the lower periphery free to pivot and allow for passage of fluid. However, as the flap portion thus only constitutes a small part of the valve element,
10 there is a large amount of surplus material that does not take part in the actual function of the device. Furthermore, the sealing operation entails that the manufacture of the device becomes more complicated.

US patent No. 3,968,925 discloses an anti-reflux
15 valve located at the drip chamber of a fluid drainage bag, in which connecting portions of the valve element are formed as two radially extending ears protruding from the flap portion. The ears are received in retaining pockets formed under a separate
20 retaining member in the form of a strip bonded to the drip chamber forming the valve seat. As the strip is only bonded to the drip chamber at selected portions, the valve element is slidably received in the pockets. In addition to the fact that such a slidable
25 and thus immediately releasable connection is not desirable for all purposes, the manufacture and assembly of such a device is rendered expensive and cumbersome by the separate retaining member, its attachment to the drip chamber and the positioning of
30 the valve element.

Furthermore, a commercially available device is known in which the valve element has the shape of a substantially cylindrical flap portion and a

connecting portion, in which two apertures are formed for the accommodation of retaining means in the form of protrusions such as upstanding pins or the like. The valve elements including the apertures are usually formed by any suitable cutting operation, such as punching, of a blank of material. Due to the characteristics of the materials traditionally used in such valve elements and to the dimensions of the devices, difficulties may arise during manufacture of the valve elements. Such difficulties include that the cut-out or punched-out material in the form of free waste corresponding to the apertures may adhere to the valve elements due to static electricity generated by the handling of the material. In addition to the fact that the free waste may complicate the manufacturing process and the assembly of the device and render the valve leaking, it may have severe consequences if such free waste tears itself loose during use of the system and moves to other parts of the body fluid drainage and/or sampling system. Consequently, precautions in the form of an additional production step must be taken in order to secure that the free waste is removed during manufacture of the device.

25

Summary of the invention

With this background it is an object of the present invention to improve a device of the kind mentioned in the introduction with respect to ease and efficiency of manufacture, and which at the same time provides for a secure retention of the valve element in the device.

This and further objects are met by the provision

of a device of the kind mentioned in the introduction, which is characterized in that the connecting portion includes engagement means formed integrally with the valve element for engagement with said
5 retaining means, the sheet-shaped material being intact in said valve element.

The provision of integral engagement means in the valve element, which leave the material intact, entails that the disadvantages connected with the
10 free waste produced during manufacture of the prior art devices are eliminated, both during the manufacturing process and in the finished product.

In a preferred embodiment, the engagement means include at least one incision and preferably two
15 incisions in said outer contour, said incision or incisions extending substantially transverse with respect to said longitudinal direction, said incision or incisions being preferably formed at the transition between the flap portion and the connecting
20 portion. This provides for a reliable connection between the valve element and the retaining means of the device, and an optimum use of the material and at the same time, the dimensions of the flap portion and the connecting portion may be chosen in an advantageous
25 manner.

In order to improve the retention of the valve element with respect to the retaining means even further, the engagement means may include a hook-shaped section positioned outwards of said at least
30 one incision with respect to said longitudinal direction.

In an embodiment, which is particularly advantageous with respect to manufacturing conditions, the

outer contour forms a curve defining a continuously advancing function on a respective side of the longitudinal direction.

In an alternative embodiment, the engagement means
5 are formed within said outer contour. This provides for a particularly compact design of the valve element.

The engagement means are advantageously provided as at least one slit in the sheet-shaped material.

10 The body fluid to be collected and/or sampled may be of any conceivable kind. However, the device is particularly advantageous for applications in which the body fluid is urine and in which the valve seat providing part constitutes a connector for connection
15 with a urinary catheter, forms part of a hose in said system or of a sample port device.

In another aspect of the invention, a method of manufacturing a device for providing anti-reflux in a body fluid drainage and/or sampling system is
20 provided.

Further details and advantages are readily appreciated from the appended drawings and the following description.

25 Brief description of the drawings

In the following the invention will be described in further detail with reference to the schematic drawings, in which

Fig. 1 shows an exploded perspective view of a
30 device according to an embodiment of the invention,

Fig. 2 shows a plan view, on a larger scale, of a detail of the device shown in Fig. 1, and

Figs. 3 to 6 show plan views of alternative em-

embodiments of a detail of the device according to the invention.

Detailed description of preferred embodiments

5 A device for providing anti-reflux, i.e. for preventing backflow or reflux, in a body fluid drainage and/or sampling system is generally designated 1 in Fig. 1. The device 1 comprises a first part 2 which in the embodiment shown consti-
10 tutes a connector having connecting means 3 for releasable interconnection with e.g. a discharge tube (not shown) of a urinary catheter, and a second part 4 intended for connection with the first part 2 at one end 5. At an opposite end 6 of the second part 4
15 connecting means (not shown in detail) are provided for connection with e.g. a tube or hose (not shown) leading to e.g. a collection bag for the body fluid. The second part 4 furthermore comprises an opening 7 for the taking of a sample of the fluid. The above
20 details of the device are not essential to the present invention. The device could be positioned in other parts of the system as well. Examples of such alternative positions are: in a hose or tube member of the system, or in a sample port device. The device
25 may also be utilized in connection with other body fluids than urine.

The first part 2 and the second part 4 each has a through-going cavity, of which only the cavity 8 of the first part 4 is clearly visible. The cavities are
30 intended to lead the body fluid from e.g. the catheter to the collection bag. In order to prevent body fluid from flowing in the opposite direction, a valve element 9 is inserted between the first and

second parts 2,4. The valve element 9, which will be described in further detail in the following, is accommodated in the first part 2 and is retained in its position by means of integral retaining means.

5 The integral retaining means include two protrusions 10a,10b formed integrally with the inner wall of the first part 2. These protrusions 10a,10b split the space in which the valve element 9 is accommodated partly in two, i.e. a recess 11 on one side and a
10 section forming a valve seat 12 on the other. The second part 4 may be provided with one or more protrusions corresponding to the recess 11 such that the valve element 8 is securely retained in the first part 2. In case fluid for some reason should flow or
15 be pressed back in the direction from the second part 4 to the first part 2, the valve element 9 is brought into abutment with the valve seat 12 surrounding the cavity 8, and backflow into the first part 2 and further into e.g. the catheter is prevented.

20 The structure of the valve element 9 is shown in further detail in Fig. 2. The valve element 9 includes a connecting portion 13 and a flap portion 14. In the embodiment of Figs. 1 and 2, the shape of the valve element 9 as defined by its outer contour
25 15 and a longitudinal direction illustrated by a longitudinal line 16 is such that an incision 17,18 is formed at the transition between the flap portion 14 and the connecting portion 13 on either side of the longitudinal line 16. Each of the incisions 17,18
30 extends substantially transverse with respect to the longitudinal direction of the valve element 9, however as indicated in Fig. 2 with a slight inclination in the direction of the connecting

portion 13. Outwards of the incisions 17,18, as seen with respect to the longitudinal line 16, a hook-shaped section 19,20 is formed on the connecting portion 13. The incisions 17,18 and the hook-shaped portions 19,20 form part of integral engagement means of the valve element 9. As will be described in further detail in connection with the description of the embodiment of Fig. 3, the provision of integral engagement means entails a number of advantages during manufacture as well as in use of the device. During manufacture of the device these integral engagement means are brought into engagement with the retaining means of the first part 2, as the connecting portion 13 of the valve element 9 is placed in the recess 11. The form-locking engagement between the incisions 17,18 and the hook-shaped sections 19,20 of the valve element 9 and the protrusions 10a,10b of the first part 2 prevents that the valve element 9 is moved from its accommodation in the first part 2.

It is noted that in the embodiment shown, the valve element 9 is substantially symmetrical with respect to the longitudinal line 16. However, other configurations of the valve element 9 are of course conceivable, including those in which the incisions are not of the same shape. Furthermore, the first part 2 and the second part 4 may be separate parts which are assembled in any suitable manner. The device 1 may comprise additional parts such as e.g. separate locking means for keeping the first and second parts 2,4 in an assembled state.

In Fig. 3 another embodiment of a valve element 109 is shown. Only differences from the embodiment

shown in Figs. 1 and 2 will be described in detail. The valve element 109 comprises a connecting portion 113 and a flap portion 114. In principle, the engagement means of the valve element 109 are formed
5 in the same manner as in the embodiment of Figs. 1 and 2 and thus include incisions 117,118 for engagement with retaining means of e.g. the first part of the anti-reflux device. However, sections 119,120 of the connecting portion 113 do not extend
10 outwards of the incisions 117,118, as the outer contour 115 of the valve element 109 forms a curve defining a continuously advancing function on a respective side of the longitudinal direction illustrated by longitudinal line 116. This entails,
15 i.a., that during manufacture of the valve element 109, only two points at a time need to be cut when the valve element 109 is cut out of a blank of sheet-shaped material 130. The cutting operation may be performed by punching, stamping or die-cutting,
20 preferably in a rolling operation, or by using any other suitable technique such as cutting by water or laser. The sheet-shaped material forming the blank 130 may be of any suitable material known per se and having suitable dimensions, such as a relatively thin
25 plastic material. As in the previously and subsequently described embodiments, the provision of integral engagement means entails that no cut-out or punched-out material in the form of free waste is produced. There is thus no need for manufacturing
30 steps including the removal of the free waste, as the lattice waste formed is coherent. This is of particular importance when the dimensions are small, as is the case here, as forces resulting i.a. from

the static electricity generated by handling of the material may exceed other forces, such as gravity.

As an alternative, the engagement means may be provided within the outer contour of the valve element. It is, however, a requirement that the sheet-shaped material is kept intact during the provision of the engagement means. It is a further requirement that the retaining means of the anti-reflux device, e.g. provided in the first part, are formed in a corresponding manner.

Examples of such engagement means are shown in Figs. 4 to 6, in which only features regarding the engagement means will be described in detail.

In the embodiment of Fig. 4, the engagement means are formed as a pair of crescent-shaped slits 240 and 241 in the connecting portion 213 of the valve element 209. The outer contour 215 of the valve element 209 may be formed such that the transition area between the flap portion 214 and the connecting portion 213 is slightly narrowed.

In Fig. 5 a pair of longitudinally extending slits 340,341 constitute the engagement means.

In Fig. 6, only one set 440 of engagement means is provided in the form of two crossed slits 440a,440b. Other configurations and combinations of such slits are of course conceivable, including three sets of engagement means cooperating with a corresponding number of retaining means of the device.

The invention should not be regarded as being limited to the embodiments described in the above and shown in the drawings. Various modifications and combinations are conceivable without departing from the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1. A device for providing anti-reflux in a body fluid drainage and/or sampling system comprising:

at least one part providing a valve seat, and

5 a valve element defining an outer contour formed from a sheet-shaped material blank, said valve element including at least one connecting portion and a flap portion and defining a longitudinal direction extending between the connecting portion and the flap
10 portion, and

retaining means for retaining the valve element with respect to the device, said retaining means being integral with the device,

c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that

15 the connecting portion includes engagement means formed integrally with the valve element for engagement with said retaining means, the sheet-shaped material being intact in said valve element.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1, in which the
20 engagement means include at least one incision and preferably two incisions in said outer contour, said incision or incisions extending substantially transverse with respect to said longitudinal direction, said incision or incisions being preferably
25 bly at the transition between the flap portion and the connecting portion.

3. A device as claimed in claim 2, in which said engagement means include a hook-shaped section positioned outwards of said at least one incision
30 with respect to said longitudinal direction.

4. A device as claimed in claim 2, in which said outer contour forms a curve defining a continuously advancing function on a respective side of the

longitudinal direction.

5. A device as claimed in claim 1, in which said engagement means are formed within said outer contour.

5 6. A device as claimed in claim 5, in which said engagement means are provided as at least one slit in the sheet-shaped material.

7. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the body fluid is urine and said
10 valve seat providing part constitutes a connector for connection with a urinary catheter, forms part of a hose in said system or of a sample port device.

8. A method of manufacturing a device for providing anti-reflux in a body fluid drainage and/or
15 sampling system, comprising the following steps:

providing at least one part including a valve seat,

forming a valve element defining an outer contour from a sheet-shaped material blank, said valve
20 element including at least one connecting portion and a flap portion,

providing retaining means integral with the device, and

bringing the connecting portion into engagement
25 with the retaining means,

c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that

engagement means are formed integrally with the valve element, the sheet-shaped material being kept intact in said valve element.

30 9. A method as claimed in claim 8, in which said outer contour is formed along a curve defining a continuously advancing function on a respective side of the longitudinal direction.

14

10. A method as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 9, in which said outer contour is provided by a cutting operation such as punching, stamping or die-cutting.

5 11. A method as claimed in claim 10, in which the cutting operation is performed in a rolling operation.

12. A method as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 10, in which said outer contour is provided by
10 cutting by means of laser, water etc.

15

Abstract

The device (1) for providing anti-reflux has a valve element (9) formed from a sheet-shaped material
5 blank. The valve element includes a connecting portion and a flap portion. Retaining means (10a,10b) for retaining the valve element are integral with the device. The connecting portion includes engagement means formed integrally with the valve element for
10 engagement with the retaining means, the sheet-shaped material being intact in the valve element.

(Fig. 1)



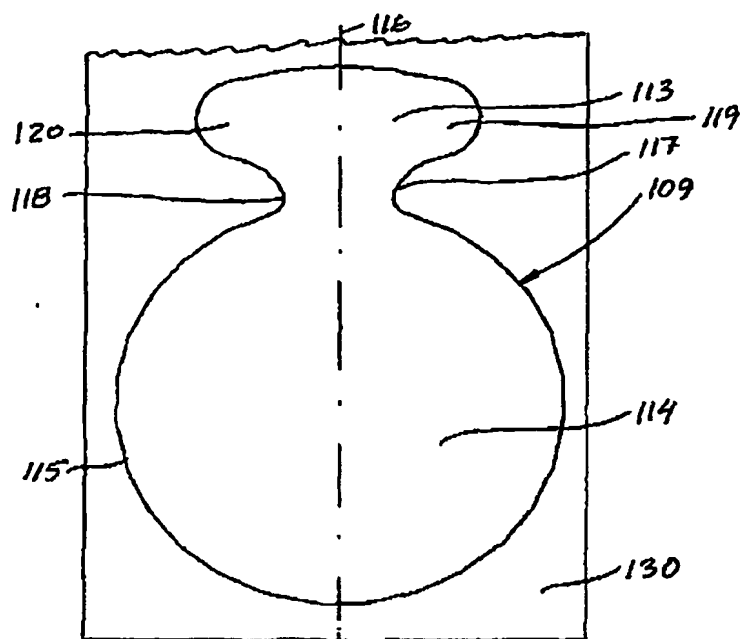


Fig. 3

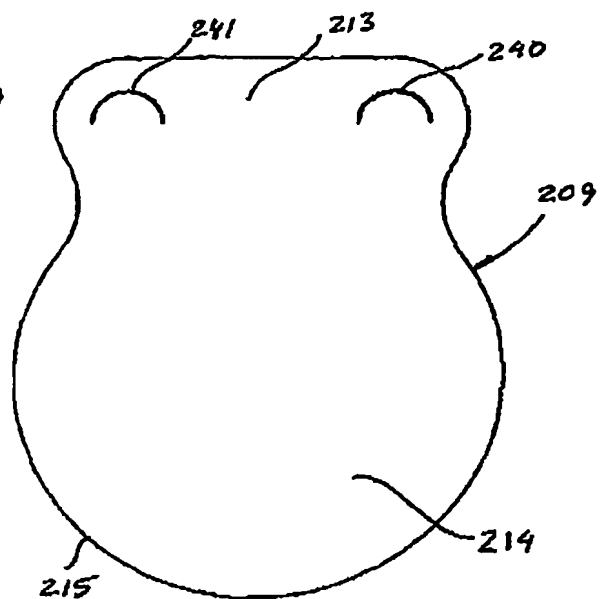


Fig. 4

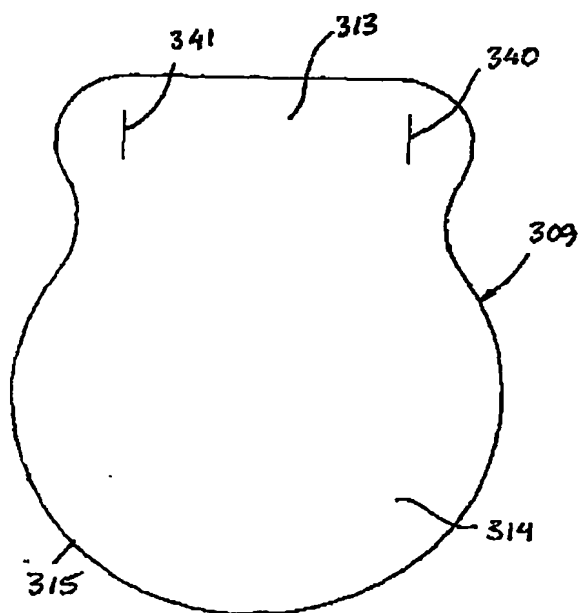


Fig. 5

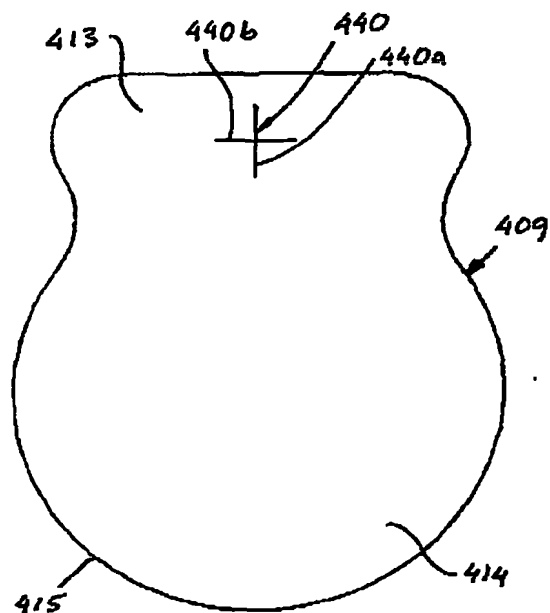


Fig. 6

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